



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicaid
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Boston, MA 02111
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Eligibility Operations Memo 04-10
August 1, 2004

TO: MassHealth Eligibility Operations Staff

FROM: Russ Kulp, Deputy Director, MassHealth Operations

RE: **Virtual Gateway/Common Intake Process**

Introduction

During the past eight months, the Central Processing Unit (CPU) has been accepting on-line applications (e-MBRs) from the Patient Accounts staff at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). The e-MBR will soon be replaced by a new process called the **Virtual Gateway/Common Intake Process (VG/CIP)**.

The goal of the VG/CIP is to provide a single point of intake, eligibility screening, and referral services for applicants. This allows potential applicants of health and human services in the Commonwealth, either directly through the Web or with assistance from a Health and Human Services (HHS) or patient-accounts staff person, to obtain information and to gain access to available HHS programs. In addition, providers will also be able to track electronically submitted VG/CIP applications.

The VG/CIP will be available for the following HHS programs.

- MassHealth
 - Children's Medical Security Plan (CMSP)
 - Healthy Start
 - Uncompensated Care Pool (starting October 2004)
- Food Stamps
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Substance Abuse (catalog and screening only)
- Child Care
- Women's Health Network
- Early Intervention Program (EIP) (catalog only)

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Introduction
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The VG/CIP includes the following three components.

- An on-line catalog – contains descriptions of HHS programs – *available to consumers.*
- The Screening and Referral survey – is a series of prescreening questions to determine potential eligibility for certain HHS programs – *available to consumers.*
- The Common Intake Tool (a data collection tool) – acts as a single “combined” or “common” application for collecting and transmitting data to the appropriate HHS program for an eligibility determination (for MassHealth, this data is transferred to MA21) – *this will first be available as a pilot program at four sites: MGH in Boston (where we piloted the e-MBR), St. Francis House in Boston, Joseph Smith Community Health Center in Allston, and the Quincy Child Care Resource and Referral Agency in Quincy. Over time, this tool will be available to all service providers.*

MassHealth Applications

The VG/CIP results in more efficient processing of applications for MassHealth because it:

- records the date of receipt as the date of application;
- ensures that mandatory information is provided by indicating on-line instructions and edits, and thus, reduces the need for follow-up phone calls;
- decreases the number of key strokes for Entry Data Processing (EDP) staff because the VG system automatically populates demographic information onto MA21; and
- eliminates inaccurate information caused when information provided on paper is not legible.

Accessing the VG

The consumer or provider can access the VG from the state web site, mass.gov/eohhs, by clicking on the Consumer or Provider tab.

- From the Consumer tab, the catalog and screening tool can be accessed.
- From the Provider tab, the Common Intake Tool can be accessed.
- The provider can use the Common Intake Tool to initiate an on-line application for certain HHS programs.

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**Accessing the VG
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- A series of on-line instructions guides the provider through this process, requiring certain questions to be answered and dollar amounts for any earned or unearned income to be self-declared.
 - The CPU will accept electronic applications and wait three business days for faxed or mailed verifications (i.e., income, disability).
 - The applicant will be given a package containing the various MBR application enclosures: the MassHealth Member Booklet (HCR-2), VOTE-3, ERD, OP-3, etc.
 - After the application is submitted electronically, the provider will receive a system-generated confirmation acknowledging receipt.
 - The applicant will receive a summary of his or her submitted information and a “next steps” document explaining the verification process.
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**CPU
Responsibilities**

The CPU will have the following daily responsibilities.

- Receive a Browse file from systems that lists the VG/CIP applications that have been electronically submitted.
 - Print hard copies of each application, which contain the application tracking number that is the same as the number that the applicant received when the application was submitted.
 - Prescreen and screen each application following current workflow rules.
 - Data enter each screened application onto MA21.
 - Accept verifications by fax or mail within three business days of the electronic submission date of the VG/CIP application.
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**VG/CIP Impact
on MECS**

The following describes the impact of the VG/CIP on the MassHealth Enrollment Centers (MECs).

- The VG/CIP will not change the way MEC staff currently determine MassHealth eligibility.
 - For identification purposes, each Common Intake application entered onto MA21 will have **“WEBFRM” listed on the MA21 “Receive Application”** screen in the **“Form”** field.
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**VG/CIP Impact
on MECs**
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- During the pilot, CPU will keep the MEC referrals resulting from the Virtual Gateway when the applicant or family member is known to MA21.
- At a later date, MEC staff will also have access to the Browse screen to electronically receive MEC referrals for customer service responsibilities.

Privacy Issues

The VG/CIP site for the electronic application process is a secured site. This site ensures applicants that any information sent to MassHealth will be kept confidential as required by state and federal laws.

Questions

Questions about this memo should be directed to the MassHealth Policy Hotline at 617-210-5331 through your office designee.
